

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-17 (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) A composition comprising as an active ingredient retinoic acid nanoparticles comprising mixed micelles of retinoic acid and nonionic surfactant coated with ~~an inorganic salt of polyvalent metal~~ calcium carbonate and having an average particle size of 5 to 106.4 nm.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) The composition according to claim 18 ~~or 19~~, wherein the retinoic acid nanoparticles are obtained by:
dispersing retinoic acid dissolved in a lower alcohol in an aqueous alkali solution;
adding a nonionic surfactant to the dispersion to form a mixed micelle;
adding to the mixed micelle a calcium halide or calcium acetate ~~of divalent metal~~
along with a carbonate ~~or phosphate~~ of alkali metal so that a molar ratio of the former to the latter is 1:0.01 to 1:1.0, thereby depositing a coating of the ~~inorganic salt of the polyvalent metal~~ calcium carbonate on a surface of the mixed micelle; and
adjusting an average particle size of the resulting nanoparticles to 5 to 106.4 nm.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Withdrawn) The composition according to claim 18, wherein the active ingredient is retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with zinc carbonate.

23. (Withdrawn) The composition according to claim 18, wherein the active ingredient is retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with calcium phosphate.

Claims 24-25 (Canceled)

26. (Currently amended) A sustained-release preparation containing as an active ingredient retinoic acid nanoparticles comprising mixed micelles of retinoic acid and nonionic surfactant coated with calcium carbonate and having an average particle size of 5 to 106.4 nm ~~and coated with calcium carbonate.~~

27. (Currently amended) An external preparation containing as an active ingredient retinoic acid nanoparticles comprising mixed micelles of retinoic acid and nonionic surfactant coated with calcium carbonate and having an average particle size of 5 to 106.4 nm ~~and coated with calcium carbonate.~~

28. (Currently amended) A cosmetic containing retinoic acid nanoparticles comprising mixed micelles of retinoic acid and nonionic surfactant coated with calcium carbonate and having an average particle size of 5 to 106.4 nm and coated with calcium carbonate.

29. (Withdrawn) A sustained-release preparation containing as an active ingredient retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with zinc carbonate.

30. (Withdrawn) An external preparation containing as an active ingredient retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with zinc carbonate.

31. (Withdrawn) A cosmetic containing retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with zinc carbonate.

32. (Withdrawn) A sustained-release preparation containing as an active ingredient retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with calcium phosphate.

33. (Withdrawn) An external preparation containing as an active ingredient retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with calcium phosphate.

34. (Withdrawn) A cosmetic containing retinoic acid nanoparticles having an average particle size of 5 to 300 nm and coated with calcium phosphate.